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THE
FALL
OF
UNDERWALD.

BY
AN EYE WITNESS.

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Credita res, captique dolis!

————— Quis talia fando
Temperet à lacrymis?

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.

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THE
EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THERE are few persons in this kingdom unacquainted with the state of Swisserland, as it existed before the invasion of the French. The mildness of its governments, the industry and virtue of its people, and the general appearance of prosperity, and content throughout all the Cantons, were such as recalled to an Englishman at every step the images of his own happy country. Into the hearts of Jacobins alone it could enter, to disturb this peaceful and smiling scene; But to them it was a sacred duty. The happiness of Swisserland like that of England was a contradiction to all their theories; a living monument of the blessings of regular and well-ordered government, a contrast to the miseries of France more persuasive than a thousand arguments.

From the very first moment, therefore, of the French revolution, its emissaries were diligently employed in that tranquil and unoffending country, to sow those seeds, which have produced there, as they must in every other soil, the full harvest of human misery.

In the measures taken by these mild and paternal governments, to check the progress of this evil, too much weakness certainly appeared.—A submission equally undignified and impolitic was manifested in all their conduct towards France; from whom they experienced a long series of insult, and injury, and a continued course of hardly-disguised hostility. The error was however venial. It proceeded from the habits of long tranquility, from the earnest desire of maintaining peace, and even from some remaining attachment to the interest of so old an ally as France. The punishment has been dreadful beyond example.

Few details have yet been published in England, of those horrid ravages by which the most flourishing country in Europe was laid waste, im-

mediately after the French troops had succeeded in forcing their passage into Berne. A success much less due to the superiority of their numbers, than to the artifices which they employed, on this, as on every other occasion, by holding out fresh negotiations of peace, at the very moment of their unprovoked hostility, by the perfidious breach of that very armistice, to which alone they had owed the safety of their army, and by the opinion, which in the interval they had contrived to disseminate among the Swiss troops, that they were betrayed by their own officers.

Still, however, after the conquest of Berne and the desolation of the Swiss vallies, much remained to be done. The mountain Cantons, those in which the liberty of Swisserland had originated, were yet unsubdued. The French troops marched against them, but were repulsed with loss.—What force could not do, they resorted to their usual policy to accomplish. A treaty was concluded, by which it was solemnly stipulated that those Cantons should retain the secure, and unmo-

lest enjoyment of their Religion, Government, and Laws.

This treaty has been observed precisely as all the others into which the French Republic has entered. The subjection of the other parts of Swisserland was first completed. A set of men was then found wicked and base enough, to take upon themselves in such circumstances, the functions of a SWISS DIRECTORY, and to these men, was at length committed the task of summoning to slavery the descendants of those who founded the liberty of Swisserland, and of demanding that the ministers of the Religion of their fathers should be delivered up to suffer death. The demand was resisted with horror: the French army marched to enforce it, and the result is told in the following pages, by one of the brave and unhappy men, who then fought for the last remnant of liberty in Swisserland.

It can not be necessary to apply this history to the feelings of this country. It is to be hoped that every Englishman who reads it, while he

execrates the oppressors, and makes the cause of the victims his own, will remember that if there is now a SWISS DIRECTORY at Araw, there has recently existed an IRISH DIRECTORY at DUBLIN, and that there are still amongst us men who are labouring to establish an ENGLISH DIRECTORY in LONDON.

exercise the oppressor, and make the cause of
the victim his own, will remember that if there
is now a Swiss Laboratory at Aarau, there
was formerly one at the Swiss Laboratory at
Darmstadt, and that there are still amongst us
men who are labouring to establish an American
Laboratory in London.

THE
FALL OF UNDERWALD,

&c.

DEEPLY afflicted by the misfortunes of my wretched country, in the midst of the conflagrations of our houses, and the groans of my expiring brethren, I am ill able to undertake a description of all the horrid scenes which I have witnessed in the Canton of Underwald, since the third of September. You knew that a capitulation had been made at Einsidlen, between some of the smaller Cantons, and the French General Schauemburg, which appeared to secure to us the uninterrupted enjoyment of peace, and of our ancient rights. In this hope we trusted, when suddenly we learnt that notwithstanding this

agreement, the Swiss Directory at Araw, acting under the immediate influence of France, insisted upon our taking the oath which they had imposed on the rest of the Cantons. On receiving this demand, which was accompanied by threats, and supported by the terror of the French arms, the two little Cantons of Switz and Underwald, sent Deputies first to Lucerne, and soon after to Araw. They were received at this place with every mark of indignity and insult. In vain they appealed to the express stipulations of the capitulation at Einsidlen. In vain they entreated the pretended government of Swisserland not to violate a treaty resting on public faith, the obligations of which are respected even by the most barbarous nations. This was their answer. " You, as well as the other
 " Cantons, must take the oath, and you must
 " further give up to us, alive or dead, nine
 " of your principal leaders, and among them,
 " three of your clergy. Many hundreds more
 " shall share the same fate. The consequences

“ of your obstinacy, shall be held out as an
 “ example to the whole world.”

With this insolent and menacing answer, our Deputies returned to their country. An Assembly was called without delay, who first proceeded to an unanimous resolution, to place guards in all the most important posts and avenues of the town, to prevent surprize. The message of the Directory at Araw was then publickly read to the Assembly, and the danger with which the country was menaced laid before them. Threats like these, from their former brethren, (now exercising an usurped authority over their own countrymen, under the controul of a cruel and perfidious enemy,) were received with the utmost horror and indignation, and far from bending their neck tamely to the yoke, the inhabitants of Underwald at once unanimously agreed rather to be buried in the ruins of their country, than to give up one of their fellow citizens in so dishonourable and base a manner. Every one

took up arms, and prepared to execute this heroick resolution.

On the* third of September hostilities began between our people and the French, who with the greatest part of their forces, prepared to march up against Underwald. The French with three armed vessels advanced on the lake of Wallenstad, they seized the post of Kirchstette, but were driven back with great loss, by a small number of our troops. On the fourth they advanced with five armed vessels, and on the fifth with seven to the same post, but were repulsed in both attacks with the loss of many men, and of two vessels, which ran a-ground. On our side not one man was killed. On the seventh the same was repeated, at the same time some of them skirmished near Altnach, and Kernwald. On the ninth there was a pitched battle, which lasted from five in the morning till night. This battle

* The very same third of September on which six years before the massacres of the 10th. of August were renewed in cold blood, and the remains of the Swiss troops at Paris, butchered even in the prisons.

decided our fate, and it may be reckoned, even according to the testimony of the French, one of the most severe which has been fought in our time. The enemy advanced towards us with some of the inhabitants of Berne, Zucher, Lucerne, Oberwald, and some traitors belonging to Underwald and Switz. The battle began at break of day, and was on both sides equally bloody. Notwithstanding the great superiority in number of the enemy's forces, (which without exaggeration I may reckon at 18,000,) it would not have been easy for them to subdue the courage of our brave men, had not treachery assisted them, and delivered up some of our most important posts into their hands.

The number of our army was, compared with the French, inconsiderable; it amounted to 2,000, besides 300 Switzers, who joined us as volunteers, and fought in common with us. These numbers though small were determined to conquer or to die. Their Religion, their Freedom, the Happiness of their country, their wives and children were all at stake; objects, the reso-

lute defence of which these children of the Alps consider not merely as a political or moral obligation, but as a religious duty, essential, not only to their temporal, but even to their eternal happiness. TREACHERY, and the faithlessness of some of our unworthy countrymen, who have cast a stigma on the honour of a nation, hitherto so renowned for courage and fidelity, are the causes of the irrecoverable loss which we have sustained. Our enemies are indebted to the same TREACHERY for ALL the advantages which they have acquired in the present war, and which they seek to attribute to the fame of their arms.

The perfidious Directory of Araw co-operated in the execution of these atrocious projects, and the money extorted by rapine and fraud from the other Cantons, afforded the means of corrupting some of the lowest and most profligate of the inhabitants of Underwald. It was these villains who sold their country. Under the pretence of the warmest affection to the common cause, they associated with their countrymen in

arms. In the battle they turned their backs upon us, and even attempted to imbrue their hands in the blood of their brothers. We resisted long, but at last TREACHERY aided by superiority of number prevailed; the blood of the Swifs flowed in streams over our once smiling country.

Never did a troop fight with more determined valour, than my brave brethren did on that day. No one of them wished to outlive the destruction of his country; they all courted death, desirous only before they fell, to mark their fall by that of an enemy. Even our wives appeared to envy the honour which their husbands acquired, and took up arms with us, to share our glory; preferring death rather than submission to the mercy of such an enemy. More than a hundred of them were put to the sword, and died like heroines. Every one knows the cruelty of the French Republicans, and how many defenceless creatures have on every occasion been sacrificed in cold blood, as victims of their uncontrouled

barbarity ; their conduct is but too familiar to all Europe, their plunder of all property, their violation of every thing that is esteemed most sacred, their confiscations, their sacrilege, and their massacres ; but never was their inhuman rage more strongly exemplified than on this day so fatal to my gallant countrymen. Our Priests, our Nuns, our Old Men, our Wives and Children, were indiscriminately butchered even at the altar.— Churches, houses, the property of the unoffending and defenceless inhabitants, the little fortunes which the unremitted labours of a century had accumulated, were all given as a prey to the flames. Stanztaadt, Bucks, Beckened, and every house as far as Ennemos, are burnt to ashes.— The ground is every where strewed with bodies, and covered with blood, and the smoke still ascending from the ruins of our once peaceable and happy dwellings, spreads itself over the whole atmosphere, and adds to the horror of the scene.

SUCH ARE THE GLORIES OF FRANCE ! Such the triumphs of Jacobins and Atheists ! Let us

in the midst of all our misfortunes preserve an unshaken courage: Let us cherish with unabated ardour our affection for our unhappy country, and above all things let us cultivate in our hearts the sentiments of that Religion which affords the best reward of virtue, and the surest consolation in affliction. Well knowing that the day will come when every one of the parricides who have surrendered up their country a prey to these merciless tyrants, shall answer for their crime at the terrible JUDGEMENT-SEAT OF GOD.

To the Directory at Araw, to our faithless and degenerate countrymen, but still more, to the bloody tyranny of the French, we owe all our miseries. Their base and unmanly revenge thirsts for blood when conquest has been achieved, their avarice is never sated, their ambition aspires to Universal Dominion, their injustice has overwhelmed a people, who for centuries lived happy, in the exercise of virtue, and in the enjoyment of freedom.

Let them not triumph in the advantages they have acquired! The hope of just retribution, the love of Freedom, the hatred of France, are deeply rooted in the heart of every Swiss.— From generation to generation they shall be transmitted, till the descendants of William Tell have found the moment to shake off the yoke of tyranny, and punish the oppressors of mankind.

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